



Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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**Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)
Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Minutes
Wednesday, June 3, 2015**

Offices of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)
DuPage County Conference Room
Suite 800, 233 S. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois

Committee Members

Present: Lynn Boerman – IDNR, Ed Collins – MCCD, Jack Darin – Illinois Sierra Club, Martha Dooley – Village of Schaumburg, Jon Grosshans – U.S. EPA, Martin Jaffe – UIC, Stacy Meyers – Openlands, Deb Stone – Cook County Department of Environmental Control, Sean Wiedel – Chicago Department of Transportation, Patricia Werner – Lake County Stormwater Management Commission

Absent: Pete Harmet – IDOT, Joe Schuessler – MWRD, Mike Sullivan – Kane / Kendall Council of Mayors, Wallace Van Buren – IAWA

Staff Present: Kristin Ihnchak, Jason Navota, Louise Yeung, Elizabeth Schuh, Nora Beck

Others Present: Mark Johnston – Field Museum, Philip Rosen – Cook County, Chris Mulvany – Chicago Wilderness, Nancy Williamson – IDNR

1.0 Call to Order

Sean Wiedel called the meeting to order at approximately 9:30 a.m.

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

Nora Beck provided a brief update on the recent removal by the Governor of the Illiana Expressway from the current multi-year plan as well as the suspension of OSLAD grants in FY16. In addition, Anne McKibbin has resigned from the committee.

3.0 Approval of Minutes – May 6, 2015

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 6 meeting was made by Lynn Boerman, seconded by Martha Dooley, and with all in favor, carried.

4.0 Next Comprehensive Regional Plan – Kristin Ihnchak, CMAP Staff

To continue the preliminary efforts conducted over the past year, CMAP staff are beginning development of the next comprehensive regional plan in earnest over the 2016 fiscal year. Using a [powerpoint presentation](#), Ihnchak explained that the development of the next plan will build upon the foundation established in GO TO 2040 by seeking to refine the plan's major policy objectives in a manner that is supportive of the agency's core land use and transportation responsibilities, as well as identifying limited new policy directions that are complementary to CMAP's role. More specific policies and recommendations may address both the granularity in the current plan's policies as well as expand to geographically-oriented approaches for some policy areas. New and refined policy directions are expected to be explored through the creation of topical strategy papers, while the development of data-driven snapshots will define the region's existing conditions and trends.

Ihnchak described the overall planning process and timeline, snapshots and strategy papers to be developed this year, and expected touch points for the Environment and Natural Resources working committee, as summarized in this [memo](#). She specifically highlighted the planned strategy papers that relate to the working committee: geographically-based regional planning strategies, green infrastructure co-benefits in parks and open space, climate adaptation and resilience, and undeveloped, agricultural, and natural areas. Ihnchak also reviewed the next few months and the items staff will bring forward for the committee's feedback, including a presentation of the proposed mission statements for the first three strategy paper teams, discussion on initial analysis of the green infrastructure co-benefits strategy paper, and comment on possible refinements to the Green Infrastructure Vision, priority conservation areas, and similar topics being explored as part of the geographically-based regional planning strategies topic.

ENR committee members asked a number of questions, which prompted discussion on the following points, regrouped based on topic area:

- **Snapshots.** Current list doesn't include coverage of the environment and natural resources.
- **Strategy Paper Topics.** Committee members identified several topic areas that appear to be left out from the current list but are important to include, see below. Staff also clarified that the strategy papers listed define new exploration areas, but the policies outline in GO TO 2040 are still important to plan development. Patty Werner also submitted written comments on the memo.
 - **Water resources** – rivers, streams, and lakes, including Lake Michigan. These resources cross jurisdictional boundaries and require a regional approach. GO TO 2040 touched on water resources, but the plan was not granular enough and should cover these topics in more detail. The omission of Lake Michigan in GO TO 2040 should be addressed; including its contribution to water supply, nearshore pollution from stormwater runoff as well as legacy pollution and current boating activities, invasive species control, lake levels, shoreline erosion, harbor access and transportation, public access.

- **Agriculture** – 0.05% of the population in McHenry County is involved in farming; if we want farmland to remain in the region, we need to develop strategies to work on this. May want to break it out as a separate topic.
- **Undeveloped areas** – in addition to messaging, this paper should focus on how do we create a sustainable fund for natural resources and open space conservation. Similar to the financial plan for the transportation planning included in the next regional plan, this topic requires its own approach over the long term. Ihnchak clarified that the geographically-based strategy paper involves review of how to direct funding to certain types of investments – from conservation areas to infill and reinvestment. Jason Navota also mentioned the proposed FUND 2040, which is still active though quiet recently, which is one potential funding strategy.
- **Stormwater management** – Flooding damage was a big miss in GO TO 2040 and does require a regional approach (including emergency response and post-disaster reporting). Several sub-topics were identified:
 - Managing and maintaining infrastructure, including the green infrastructure that is currently under HOA jurisdiction. Is this a good approach?
 - Winter maintenance, now that Chicago River has to meet chloride levels, the region needs to work on this.
 - **Incorporating green infrastructure into transportation.** These conversations need to be happening at the same time; street reconstructions have to start including GI. This topic had a lot of resonance with committee members, citing that other MPOs are making this linkage. Recommended to expand the strategy paper on Green Infrastructure co-benefits to also include streets and other areas, not just parks and open space. Discussion about the misunderstanding of where GI fits in. GI is a way of rebuilding the region, the last 10 years have been spent trying to identify and understand, next 10 needs to be integrating it into what we do.
- **Climate mitigation**, as well as climate adaptation.
- **Energy** – In the timespan of the new plan, the region is going to entirely replace our energy supply. CMAP currently lacks jurisdiction in this arena, but who has the regional overview to work on this. Liz Schuh did identify that CMAP has reviewed this from a more narrow, economic angle. Louise Yeung foresees engaging the utilities in the climate resilience resource group.
- **Brownfield redevelopment** – Illinois and the Chicago region is underrepresented on this topic. Other MPOs (Indiana) are working together here. Discussion about inclusion of this topic in the geographically-based strategy paper as well as infill and reinvestment. Schuh recalled that for GO TO 2040, a brownfield development strategy paper was developed and can help inform future work.
- **Growth projections.** Discussion of recent demographic information showing a low population growth in the region. Liz Schuh referred to a [recent policy update](#) on

declining population growth and the potential economic impacts. CMAP is viewing this as a concern.

5.0 GIV 2.3: Ecosystem Services Valuation – Louise Yeung, CMAP Staff

Ecosystem services are the collective benefits from an array of resources and processes that are supplied by nature. Since 2004, the Chicago Wilderness Green Infrastructure Vision (GIV) has served as a spatial representation of the region's ecosystem services. In coordination with Chicago Wilderness, CMAP worked with a consultant to develop an estimate of the economic value of the ecosystem services provided by the landscapes within the GIV. This project constitutes a new release of the GIV, [version 2.3](#) which now includes an extensive review and visualization of the ecosystem service values for six services within the CMAP 7-county region. Using a [powerpoint presentation](#), Yeung reviewed the process and findings of this latest version as well as the caveats of the information and new aspects of how GIV 2.3 is organized. CMAP is recognizing it is not comprehensive, it only includes 4 services that could be measured using a benefit-transfer approach; it does not include all resources, just those in the existing GIV; and is not recommended for use at the parcel scale but larger geographies. Yeung referred to the [Green Infrastructure Vision User Guide, 2015](#) as a good resource for understanding how to use this new component to the GIV. Yeung explained that she has already shared the information with the Cook County Forest Preserves as well as the McHenry County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy project, which revealed that the aggregate value of ecosystem services was equivalent to the equalized assessed value in the County.

ENR committee members expressed appreciation for this new resource and asked a number of clarifying questions. Yeung explained that the ecosystem valuation is based on the current GIV structure, so different values were determined for different sublayers, if applicable data allowed such a refinement. These details are described in the [final report](#). The committee encouraged Yeung to host introductory trainings as this would be very helpful for people to learn about. Yeung will send information out information via the ENR email list about the one scheduled training. She was encouraged to repeat this presentation for the CMAP Land Use working committee.

6.0 Current use of the GIV – Jason Navota, CMAP Staff

CMAP is interested in gathering information about whether and how the GIV is being used by organizations in the region to help inform the next stage of the regional planning process. Navota started the discussion by asking how the GIV is currently being used and if it would need to be updated in advance of the plan. ENR committee members, audience members, and CMAP staff proceeded to discuss a number of issues related to these questions.

The current GIV is commonly used as a reference, from local planning to stormwater management planning to land protection/restoration activities; it provides the first phase of review and prompts actors to look deeper using local, updated, and/or additional datasets.

Participants reflected on how the creation of the GIV and the corresponding “green map” changed the conservation conversation over the past 10 years. It changed how people coordinated with each other, talked about natural resources. Analogies between GI and other infrastructure networks were made – we update the catalogue of other assets, like transportation, on a regular basis. GI is essential to the health of the region and should be given similar consideration.

Participants identified that existing data issues, from usability to resolution, limit the current use of the GIV. The group discussed whether, at a minimum, CMAP could update the datasets instead of also updating the spatial analysis and making the overall green map. Some identified that many potential/targeted users may not have the capacity to undertake a further review of additional datasets; highlighting both the potential of a fully updated GIV to improve that initial scan and a limitation of simply serving up a GIV data package of updated datasets without doing a full updated map.

Green infrastructure recommendations and related performance indicators and targets, which were present in GO TO 2040, are likely to be continued in the next regional plan. Committee members stated that if the next plan makes any recommendations about green infrastructure and/or open space, the GIV is worthy of an update to reflect what is actually there and to set performance metrics accordingly. Participants also reflected on the fact that if a new GIV is not included in the 2018 plan, then it likely wouldn’t be until the 2022 update; from that prospective, the data will be very out of date. However, the GIV could be updated outside of the regional plan process. The committee also viewed no major qualms with updating the 7-county area of the GIV independently from the rest of the Chicago Wilderness area.

In McHenry County, land acquisition and easements by preservation groups largely (over 90%) follows the current GIV map. The group discussed the potential for the updated GIV to identify Priority Conservation Areas, or PCAs. While more discussion time was needed on this component, two comments emerged: the potential for regional and local PCAs and the recommendation to not prioritize the PCAs using the Ecosystem Valuation tool. A recommendation was made to develop a scope of the potential options to sort out the most viable path forward.

6.0 Other Business

No other business.

7.0 Public Comment

No public comments.

8.0 Next Meeting

The ENR Committee is scheduled to meet next on Wednesday, July 1, 2015.

9.0 Adjournment

The meeting ran late and smaller group adjourned.